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No. 60

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. DEGETTE).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 16, 2008.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DIANA DEGETTE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Dr. Charles B. Simmons, Memorial Drive United Methodist Church, Houston, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Ever-present God: Humbly we pause to approach You. Help us to come before You in reverence that You may enter into our presence with power.

In this hallowed House, we thank You for these Your servants who now guard its great legislative inheritance and seek to profit the Nation by wise governance. Endow each with a right understanding, pure purposes and sound speech. Enable them to rise above all personal agendas and party zeal to the nobler concerns of the public good. Give them vision and set their hearts afire with large resolves.

Lord, lead them, that in all deliberations they may faithfully discharge the duties of their office and ever promote the health, safety and well-being of all whom they serve, for the good of the United States of America, the blessing of our world, and the glory of Your holy name. In His, we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the

last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING DR. CHARLES B. SIMMONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. CULBERSON. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's my privilege to rise today to honor my pastor and my good friend, Dr. Charles B. Simmons, our chaplain for the day.

Dr. Simmons joins us from my hometown of Houston, Texas, and it is just a thrill to have him here today. Dr. Simmons baptized our daughter, Caroline. He has been our minister for many, many years at Memorial Drive United Methodist Church.

He is joined here today by his wife, Carol; his son, Christopher; and Christopher's wife, Melissa. We are thrilled to have them here. Dr. Simmons and his wife, Carol, also have a son, Jeffrey, who is not here with us today.

Dr. Simmons is serving in his 10th year as senior minister of Memorial Drive United Methodist Church. He is recognized nationally as a dynamic minister, a dedicated pastor and respected leader among Methodists. He

led the way at our church to reach out to the people of Louisiana who suffered as a result of the hurricane and helped rescue many, many lives and put many lives back on track after that devastating storm.

Dr. Simmons is a native of Louisiana, a graduate of Centenary College, who earned his master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from Emory University, and completed his further graduate study in Geneva, Switzerland, as a Methodist fellow. He has served in a variety of appointments, and his leadership has enriched the lives of our congregation and grown our church now to 7,000 members of Memorial Drive United Methodist Church.

We are very proud to have him here. His leadership has been instrumental in developing The Connection Center, an off-campus site serving as an outpost for ministry with state-of-the-art facilities for senior adult and youth programs. We have also founded, under Dr. Simmons' leadership, a third site at the former Shepherd Drive United Methodist Church which is now in operation as well.

Outside of our local congregation, Dr. Simmons also serves as chair of the Texas Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, a member of the Large Church Initiative Team, and is active in both the administrations of Centenary College and Emory University.

With deep appreciation for his leadership to Memorial Drive United Methodist Church, his devotion to its members and his beneficial efforts to the community at large, it is my privilege to welcome Dr. Simmons and his family to Washington. I am honored to have him here today as our guest chaplain.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain requests for up to

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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15 further 1-minute speeches on each side.

HONORING MARINE LANCE CORPORAL DEAN OPICKA

(Mr. KAGEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KAGEN. Madam Speaker, several days ago, Marine Lance Corporal Dean Opicka was killed in action while serving our Nation in Iraq. Dean was 29 years of age and is the third Luxemburg-Casco High School alumnus killed in Iraq.

David and Donna Opicka of Casco, Wisconsin, are the proud parents of Dean, who graduated from Luxemburg-Casco High School in 1997.

Dean joined the Marines in August of 2005 and graduated from boot camp at Camp Pendleton, California, in November. He was a brave member of the Milwaukee-based 2/24 Fox Company.

William Shakespeare, in his play, "Julius Caesar," wrote, "Cowards die many times before their deaths; the valiant never taste of death but once."

On behalf of every citizen in these United States I wish to express our sincerest gratitude to Marine Lance Corporal Dean Opicka. To his parents and family, this House of Representatives expresses our deepest regrets on his passing and thanks for his service.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

In honor of Dean Opicka, I respectfully request a moment of silence.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All Members will stand and observe a moment of silence.

IN APPRECIATION OF THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise today in appreciation of the brave men and women of the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Earlier this week, I had the opportunity to tour the DEA's anti-meth lab training facility as well as the chance to briefly speak to agent trainees. Meth leaves lives destroyed and communities shaken to the core. These agents have literally devoted their lives to protect our communities and deserve our thanks for their efforts to combat the scourge of illegal drugs.

Though the number of meth labs in America has decreased since 2006, Mexican drug cartels are creating super labs, which produce a huge percentage of the meth in our country. This is why I introduced the Meth Kingpin Elimination Act last year, which would increase penalties on drug manufacturers and smugglers.

Meth abuse and production knows no borders, and I thank the instructors and students at Quantico for taking time to show us how important it truly is to win the war on drugs.

IRAQ AND OUR TAXES

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, yesterday our constituents filed their tax returns, but I wonder how many American taxpayers realize that the average tax return will be consumed in less than half a second in the Iraq war. When we grant the President the additional \$100 billion he is asking in emergency funding for Iraq, we will be spending \$5,000 a minute and \$12 billion a month in a lost cause.

The American taxpayer is still paying for Iraq's garbage collection, their schools, their health clinics and their roads. When the Iraqi people themselves are running a surplus. They have almost \$70 billion in accumulated surplus now.

The last couple of years, they have had \$100 billion come in from oil revenue, and they budgeted it at about \$55 a barrel. It is now about \$112 a barrel. They are generating an enormous surplus that they don't know what to do with, and a whole lot of it is being stolen.

And yet we are paying still to collect their garbage. There is something wrong with this picture and the American taxpayer needs to stand up and speak out about it with a full measure of outrage.

CRIME

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, according to the Department of Justice, one person is assaulted in the United States every 7.2 seconds, raped every 2.7 minutes and murdered every 31 minutes. That means that in the last hour, 500 Americans will have been assaulted, 22 raped and 2 murdered. Congress can and must do more to protect American families and keep our communities safe.

In this Congress, Republicans have introduced over 100 bills to help Federal, State and local law enforcement officials combat crime. To date, though, only three have been considered.

As we recognize National Crime Victims' Rights Week, Congress should do more than just honor the victims. Let's help law enforcement officials shield an innocent person from assault, protect a woman from rape and save a life.

TAXPAYER ASSISTANCE ACT, A GOOD GOVERNMENT TAX BILL

(Mr. SIREs asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIREs. Madam Speaker, as millions of Members filled out their tax returns this week, many were con-

cerned that their hard-earned tax dollars will be sent straight to Iraq. We have already spent \$44 billion rebuilding Iraq, and the war costs our Nation about \$12 billion a month.

We have families struggling here at home that can't pay their bills, are losing their homes, don't have health care, and the Bush administration is spending \$12 billion a month on a war that shows no end in sight and no plans for success.

Our monthly investment in Iraq translated into approximately \$339 million every single day. Taxpayers are probably wondering how could we better invest that money here in the United States. The \$339 million we spend in Iraq a day could provide 48,000 homeless veterans with a place to live or we can assure 317,000 kids receive their vaccinations and live a healthy life.

House Democrats vow to fight to ensure that American tax dollars are used to rebuild America, not Iraq.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER IN AMERICAN LIFE AND HISTORY

(Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today as a member of the bipartisan Congressional Prayer Caucus to formally acknowledge the importance of prayer in American life and American history.

Today I am honored to launch the first of what I hope will be weekly reminders of our country's need for prayer. I do so by reading a proclamation given by President Ronald Reagan in 1983 when he said, "From the birth of our Republic, prayer has been vital to the whole fabric of American life."

As we crossed and settled the continent, built a Nation in freedom, endured war and critical struggles to become a sentinel of liberty, we repeatedly turned to our Maker for strength and guidance in achieving the awesome tasks before us.

Whether at the ordeal of the Revolutionary War, the stormy days of binding the 13 colonies into one country, the Civil War, or other moments of trial over the years, we have turned to God for His help. As we are told in II Chronicles 7:14: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

□ 1015

CCDBG AND HEAD START FUNDING

(Mr. SESTAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SESTAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about increasing support and funding for the Child Care and